

*A modest Vindication of the Earl of Shaftsbury :  
In a Letter to a Friend concerning his being Elected  
King of Poland.*

AT a time when the eyes of all *Europe* are directed towards the event of our present Affairs ; At such a time as this when the Ballance of our publick safety seems so equally poi'd, that it is hard to guess in which Scale lies our Happiness, or Ruin : I think it my duty, as an honest man, a true Subject to the Government I live under, and a Friend to Truth ; to give you (since you so earnestly have requested it) my just and impartial Sentiments of our present condition, as it particularly relates to the Earl of *Shaftsbury* now under Confinement in the *Tower*.

This Great Man, (I cannot but call him so) this immediate first mover (as some would have it) of all the dreadful Revolutions that perhaps of late years have seem'd to threaten us, will nevertheless appear to you by the following Relation which I am to give you of him, a Man as very Extraordinary in his Abilities, so no less wonderful for his Virtue. Not to mention his unshaken Obedience to every Government he has been concerned in, or lived under ; his steady adhærence to every Religion that had but hopes to be established ; his unwearied endeavours for the restauration of the publick Peace in the time of our late unhappy Troubles ; his admirable Counsils all along for the improvement of the common Good of the Kingdom ; the Honour and Safety of the Monarchy, the Success of our Arms, and the Overthrow of our Enemies.

His Obedience to the Government is sufficiently evident, in so much that That never chang'd, but He did : His endeavours for publick Peace are eminently notorious ; for in the late Civil War (in spight of all Obligations of Honour and Loyalty to the contrary,) he forsook the King, and carry'd over his Regiment to the Parliament on purpose as much as in him lay to weaken the Royal Cause, and by the ruin of that, to bring that War to an end, that no more Rebell Blood might be shed, though the great *Martyrs* veines were drein'd afterwards without Mercy.

So much he then acted for publick Peace, but what he has advised for publick Good would fill a Volumn up : who can enough commemorate the shutting up of the *Exchequer* to put the King out of Debt ? The breaking of the Triple League to prevent the growth of *France*, the dividing of the Fleet that we might be sure to beat the *Dutch*, though in the end it cost us a Victory ; yet certainly his meaning and foresight in it, was to preserve the Shipping, and the tender Lives of the Subject.

Then for the Honour and Safety of the Monarchy ; none so sincere, so steady and so faithful as he has been : for the Honour of the King, witness his late Speech in Parliament, afterwards printed, and burnt by the common Hangman for the safety of the King ; witness the cause of his present Imprisonment ; But for the publick safety, what Honours he has despised, what promotions neglected, will appear in the following relation, which certainly the World will never question the truth of, since the main of it has been taken from his own mouth, that perfect *Index* of his Heart, and *Oracle* of Truth.

In a late Paper, printed for the Vindication of this matchless Patriot, the Reader will find many and extraordinary Instances of Preferments and Honours, which this Noble Peer has wav'd and refus'd rather than suffer himself to be brib'd from the Interest of the common Good : But what he has meerly lost in tender pity and compassion this poor Kingdom of *England* ; and it's true Protestant Religion, ought to be remembred, as long as there is a Scepter sway'd in *Poland* ; or the *Turk* unconverted.

I suppose there are very few in this Kingdom that do not very sensibly remember the late *Inter-regnum* in *Poland* : How many Illustrious Candidates stood fair

for the *Election*: *Sobieski* indeed had done great things for that People, he had kept their Potent Enemy the *Turk* from entring any farther upon their Frontiers; was great and popular in the esteem and love of the best Army that perhaps they ever had, but that was by much too little to Entitle him to the Succession on the Throne; it appearing absolutely the Interest of that Nation that the Great *Turk* was not only to be beaten, he must in short too be converted, and who so fit for such an Enterprize, as he that next should be promoted to the Regal Authority? One that from the high place he was to possess, might not only Administer Justice to them, but Salvation to the greatest part of *Asia*.

To find out such a Spirit, one fit for so great and extraordinary an undertaking, you may imagine the wise Diet omitted no diligence: the Constitutions of all the Governments in *Europe* were lookt into, as they stood Qualifi'd both in Church and State; and whence was it so proper to expect a Law-giver, such an Oracle as they then wanted, but from the best modell'd Government, and best Disciplin'd Church in the World? Therefore upon strict enquiry, *France* appearing too Despotic, *Spain* too uncertain and irregular, *Holland* absolutely Antimonarchical, and few or no Cheese-mongers in it fit to make a Monarch of, *Germany* too near 'em; and that if once they ventur'd upon a King from thence, The Emperour upon every like occasion might be imposing one thread-bare Prince or other upon them to ease his own People: For you must note, that in *Germany* Princes are Quartered upon Provinces, as Regiments were in *England* upon Corporations in the time of Rebellion, and are indeed the great Grievance of the Countrey.

Upon these Considerations, you may imagine, Quickly the eyes of the whole Diet were cast upon little *England*, and there upon whom so soon as the little Earl of *Shaftsbury*? *Polish* Deputies were immediately sent Post *incognito* with the Imperial Crown and Scepter in a Cloak-bag to him. Old *Flood* imelt it from *Bishops* gate-street where they allighted to his Lodging; and had it not been for an old Acquaintance and ancient Friendship between King *Anthony* the Elect (for now I must call him so) and himself, I am credibly informed he had laid an Ambush for it at the *Cock Alehouse* by *Temple-Bar*, where some thirty indigent Bullies were eating stuff Beef *Helter Skelter* at his charge, on purpose to stand by, and assist him in carrying off the Booty.

But Heaven, which I hope has ordained that no Crown shall ever suffer damage for King *Anthony*'s sake, took care to preserve this; For the sinister Designs of the old *Irish* Crown-monger being yet to be doubted, this prudent Prince as I am told having try'd and fitted it to his head, carefully sent it back again by a trusty Messenger, concealed in the hulk or shell of a *Holland* Cheese taken asunder meerly for that purpose, and cemented together again by an Art, fit for no man to know but a King Prelumptive of *Poland*.

All things thus prepared; his *Election* being carryed in the Dyet so unanimously and so *nemine contradicente*, that no man to this hour ever heard of it but himself, it is not to be imagined how this little *Grigg* was transported with the thoughts of growing into a *Leviathan* he fancy'd himself the *Tidture* before *Hobb's* Commonwealth already, nay he stopt up his Tap as I am told on purpose that his Dropsey might swell him bigg enough for His Majesty, and of a sudden grew so utter an Enemy to all Republicks and Antimonarchical Constitutions, that from that hour he premeditated and laid the foundation of a worse Speech than that famous one which he utter'd once in our *English* Senate, Entituled *De-lenda est Carthago*.

But now upon deliberate and weighty consideration of the great Charge he was to undertake, many difficulties and of an extraordinary nature seemed to arise. A Protestant King being Elected to a Popish Kingdom great were the Debates within himself which way he was to steer his Course in the Administration of his Government, so as to discharge his Conscience, as well in respect of the Case incumbent upon him of the Souls of his People, as of the protection of their Properties and Persons.

The Great Turk, you have heard before, was to be converted : Now to bring so Mighty a Potentate over to the Church of *Rome*, seem'd utterly destructive of the Protestant Interest, which he has always been so violent a Champion for : Therefore it is resolved, Protestant, and True Protestant, the Ottoman Emperour must be, or nothing. But how (when that was done) to establish the same Church in his own Dominions ? there was the great Question. Whereupon, after due Consideration, he resolved at his taking Possession of that Throne, which stood gaping for him, to carry over from hence such Ministers, both of Church and State, as might be proper to advise, assist and support him, in a Design so pious, though so difficult.

Immediately therefore he proceeds to the drawing a Scheme of the whole Ministry of his Government ; and in a large Scrawl, whereon was indorsed in Text Letters this Magnificent Title ; Arcana Imperii Poloniensis sub Regno Augustissimi Principis Anthonii Ashlei primi Dei Gratia tuis Populi Regis, &c. was contained a List of all the great Officers of the Crown, and of his Household, which (according to the best light I could get into the matter) was as follows :

Seignioro Roberto Howardensko — Eskriekski,	Our Chancellour. Our Treasurer.
Slaoberigund Kentelaus, Tarsallan Huntingtonierkew, Jalonxien Greyoski, Whiggund Arronowitz,	Privy-Councillors, and Lords of our Bed-Chamber.
Loyallin Mordantaiko, Braggardo Maclesfeildowski, and his two Sons,	Admiral of Our Fleet, at present under an Embargo. Generals of Our Army.
Thomazo Armstrongeyland,	Captain of a Troop of tolerated Bandetti to raise Arbitrary Contributions.
Seigniori Newportoski,	Comptroller of Our Household, and Master of Our Ceremonies, to shew his Civility on one hand, and his Justice on the other.
Fidelio Porterewski,	First Groom of our Bed-Chamber, though we suspect him for little better than a Spy to the Pope.
Rich. Cooling and his Friend W. Herbert, Tom. Merry,	Secretaries of State.
Suffolkin Feltonaiko, Griffinceper, surnamed the Clown,	Clerk of the Council.
Boobyan Bridgesmund, Slowchero Poslenowitz,	Masters of the Horse and Dog-whippers by turns.
Don Stephano Volponiester,	Conceal'd Politicians and Counsellours under the Character and Livery of Our Chair-men.
Prince Prettyman Perkinoski,	Another under the disguise of a Footman, but designed Paymaster of Our Army.
Slingibeski Betheliski, Francisco Turnspitanski,	Our Adopted Heir, because a little wiser than Our own Son, and designed to be offered to the Dyt for Our Successor; His present Imployment (together with the assistance of the Prince's his Sister) is, to cure the Plica, or King's Evil of this Country, in case Our own Majesty should fail of that Vertue.
The Valiant Russillans,	Chief Headsman of Warsaw. Esquire of Our Body, in case he will promise not to sell his place.
	Captain of Our Guards, and Knight of the Haltér, a new Order to be instituted at Our Coronation.

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*Cappellanoff le Grandi,**Madona la bella Croftesia,  
Poulneyinda la Pruda,**Everardo Fitz-henerisko,**Jean Drydenurtzitz,**Tom. Shadworski,**Sodomito Fanshawiski,*Intended Vice-Roy of the first Kingdom our General  
shall Conquer.Lady Abbesses for two Protestant Nunneries, to be  
established for the use of Us and Our Ministers.To write Libels against Us by Our own Consent, to  
bring Us into favour with Our People.Our Poet Laureat for writing Panegyricks upon  
*Oliver Cromwel*, and Libels against his present Ma-  
ster King *Charles II. of England*.

His Deputy.

Designed Our Ambassador to the Grand Seigneur  
with a Present of Protestant hand-som Boys in or-  
der to his Conversion.

This was the best account I could possibly get of the matter: There were indeed a great many more nominated to Offices and Preferments; but not being able to gain a perfect Catalogue of them, I have contented myself with barely a recital of such things as upon my own knowledge I dare recommend to the world for Truth; and that, to the best of my remembrance, I have exactly observed in the foregoing Relation.

But in the very height of all this expectation, one night as his Majesty Elect lay musing in his Bed, restless with the thoughts and expectation of the approaching Empire, there appeared to him by the light of a Lamp that was burning in his Chamber, a dreadful and most monstrous Vision; the Shape and Figure of it was very Confused and Irregular; sometimes it look'd like the Whore of *Babylon*, naked, and of immense nudities; Presently, in the twinkling of an eye, the Form was changed, and it appeared like a Justice of Peace strangled by a Crew of Rufians, who afterwards ran him thorow the Body with his own Sword, that it might be thought he hanged himself; Of a sudden it was alter'd again, and seem'd a Troop of Pilgrims, armed with *Black-Bills*, that came from the Lord knows whence, landed the Lord knows where, and are gone the Lord knows whither. His Majesty seeing it vary so often, and so terribly, (calling up all the Faith he had to his assistance) boldly demanded, *In the Name of &c. what art Thou?* Instantly, after a terrible Clap of Thunder, attended with several Flashes of Lightning, it contracted itself into the shape of a Doctor of *Salamancha*, and in an hideous tone cried, *I am a PLOT; Woe to England; Farwel till 78.* and vanished. No sooner was it gone, but a stupid amazement seized upon the Majesty of *Poland*, and cast him into a deep sleep, where he lay till morning; when awaking, he found himself stript of all the high and aspiring thoughts that before had filled his mind; Pity and Compassion towards his Native-Country cooled utterly his Ambition; and from that moment he laid by all thoughts of Converting the *Turk*, and resolved to stay at home for the Confounding the *Pope*.

Thus has this good Earl (for now he is no more his Majesty again) refused the greatest Promotion that perhaps any Subject of *England* was ever raised to, merely to stand in a Gap here, and stay the Plague that was coming upon us.

*Sir*, what Justification of him may be gathered from the Truth of this, and his present condition, I leave to your better Judgment, and subscribe my self

Your humble Servant, &c.